The Military Decision Making Process - A Combat Service Support Perspective

This appendix provides an overview of the military decision making process (MDMP) used by the CSS battle staff providing support to brigade and below echelons and is not intended as an all-inclusive description of the process. Refer to the appropriate tactical standard operating procedures for detailed information. Also, refer to FM 5-0 (101-5), Planning, Chapter 5, for more detailed information reference MDMP.

OVERVIEW

A-1. The MDMP must be integrated from top to bottom and from bottom to top in order to produce a synchronized concept of support that effectively supports the brigade tactical operation. The support battalion should have a CSS planner (liaison officer-LNO) who actively participates with the brigade S-1 and S-4 in the MDMP. Information must flow continuously between the brigade S-1/S-4, the support battalion, and the battalion task force S-1/S-4. At each level, the logistics estimate process should assess CSS capabilities, develop detailed requirements, and identify shortfalls as well as possible solutions. The logistics estimate process must be continuous and communication between the many CSS planners is essential. An integrated CSS concept of support must provide, at each level, the details of how a unit will both receive and provide support throughout an operation. It must provide enough detail so commanders know how they will be supported as well as how they and their subordinate units will execute the CSS portion of their mission.

A-2. The support battalion's challenge during the MDMP is to determine how they will support the brigade. Additionally, the support battalion staff must determine how they should support their internal units, how to configure and defend the BSA (based on a continuous intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB) process) and if, when, where, and how the BSA should relocate to support the brigade or protect support battalion CSS assets.

A-3. The CSS planners at all echelons must actively participate during each stage of the MDMP, and these planners must not only participate, but they must communicate with each other throughout the process. The following seven steps of the MDMP should be completed in order to ensure all units within the brigade produce complete, viable, and well-integrated orders:

- Receipt of mission.
- Mission analysis.
- COA development
- COA analysis (war game).
- COA comparison.
- COA approval.
- Orders production.

A-4. Throughout the MDMP, the brigade will be ahead of both the support battalion and the task forces in the planning process. Therefore, it's critical that the brigade planners provide as much information, as soon as possible, to subordinate units on what courses of action the brigade is considering. This information should come in the form of verbal and written warning orders. At this stage of the MDMP, it is also critical that CSS planners complete an updated logistics estimate. This will result in an accurate appraisal of their CSS capabilities, detailed requirements (how much of what class of supply, by specific type, where and when) and if there are shortfalls in capabilities. Proposed solutions should then begin to be developed.

A-5. As the MDMP progresses it is important that information continues to flow up and down among the CSS planners in the brigade. Logistics estimates must be continually updated. Courses of action must be developed and analyzed by the CSS planners to support the various courses of action that are developed for the concept of the operation by the brigade and task force planners.

A-6. The courses of action are compared, and one is recommended to the commander as the best option for providing support to the task force, support battalion, and the brigade. The commander selects the course of action which he feels best supports his concept of the operation. Throughout this stage of the MDMP, information must flow between the brigade, support battalion, and task force CSS planners. After the commander has made his decision, warning orders to subordinate units must be issued. Staffs at each echelon now produce a complete operations order. For brigade level CSS planners, this includes paragraph four (concept of support), a CSS annex/overlay and possibly a CSS matrix. For task force level CSS planners, this includes paragraph 4 (concept of support) and possibly a CSS annex/matrix with additional information on support arrangements. The support battalion should produce a full five-paragraph field order. Paragraph four for the support battalion should discuss the concept of internal CSS support. Additionally, this paragraph should be expanded upon in a CSS annex and possibly a CSS matrix. External CSS support to the brigade should be discussed in paragraph three of the support battalion base order, in an external CSS support annex, and possibly a CSS matrix. The support battalion order must also contain in the base order appropriate

annexes on how the BSA and CSS assets will be supported by the battlefield operating systems (BOS) of fire support, air defense, intelligence (to include a reconnaissance and surveillance plan) and mobility/survivability (to include NBC).

A-7.   All the orders produced by the brigade must explain to the commanders how they will be supported throughout the operation. They must also provide enough detail so that the individuals charged with executing the CSS portions of the orders (i.e. forward support battalion company commanders and task force support platoon leaders) can successfully carry out their duties.

A-8.   The MDMP begins when a mission is received from higher headquarters. Very rarely will this be in the form of a complete operations order. More likely it will begin after a verbal or written warning order is received. The commander, upon receiving a mission, should provide his staff with guidance as to how they should proceed with their analysis, and a warning order, in five-paragraph field order format, should be issued to subordinate units to allow them to begin to prepare for a new mission.

A-9.   The staff begins mission analysis by developing their initial staff estimates based upon the higher headquarters order and their commander's guidance. Mission analysis also determines what the mission of higher headquarters is, what this equates to as a mission for their unit, and the situation/circumstances that may impact upon their unit's ability to execute a particular course of action that will be proposed to accomplish the mission. Each staff officer produces an estimate in his or her area. The results of mission analysis should include completed staff estimates, including an initial intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB) by the S-2. The staff will also produce a proposed restated mission for their unit. These products will be presented to the commander and he will provide additional planning guidance to include: number of courses of action he wants the staff to develop, initial commander's critical information requirements (CCIR), timeline, risk guidance, and rehearsals to be conducted. Additionally, the commander will provide his initial intent that will include the method and end state for the operation. A second warning order should be issued to subordinate units no later than the end of mission analysis.

COMBAT SERVICE SUPPORT CONTROL SYSTEM (CSSCS)

A-10.   The CSSCS in the support operations section is a tool that can be used within the FSB to assist with the MDMP. The CSSCS provides a concise picture of unit requirements and support capabilities by collecting, processing, and displaying information on key items of supplies, services, and personnel that the commanders deem crucial to the success of an operation. The CSSCS does not duplicate STAMIS functions. The management of all items within a class of supply or support function remains STAMIS functions. Items tracked in CSSCS represent a small portion, but critical, list of the items managed by STAMIS. The

CSSCS maintains a database of unit personnel and equipment authorizations by standard requirement code (SRC) similar to table of organization and equipment (TOE) and unit and equipment planning factors. The CSSCS includes a database of equipment and personnel called a baseline resource item list (BRIL). The items that a commander identifies as critical to the operation can be selected from the BRIL to establish the commander's tracked item list (CTIL).

A-11. The CSSCS also supports the decision making process with course of action (COA) analysis. Staffs can analyze up to three COAs for a 5-day period. Variables include combat posture, unit task organization, miles traveled, and geographical region.

A-12. The COA function produces two primary system reports to assist the decision support process. They are the COA analysis report and COA comparison report.

A-13. The COA analysis report lets you conduct an analysis for each day of the 5-day period to evaluate the projected status of Class III, V, and VII assets, and an overall daily status. The report also shows a readiness color code and a commander's evaluation for each day of the analysis. You can peel back selected fields of the report to obtain more detailed information to assist you in deciding whether to accept the system's evaluation or change the commander's evaluation.

A-14. The COA comparison report captures the data presented in the analysis reports for up to three COAs and presents them in a comparative format. As with the analysis report, you can peel back selected fields to get more information and change the commander's evaluation.

CSS CONSIDERATIONS IN MISSION ANALYSIS

A-15. The logistician's input during mission analysis primarily comes from the logistics estimate. The logistics estimate is a continuous process that begins during mission analysis and is continually refined and updated through mission completion. The logistics estimate does not have a doctrinal format at the brigade level. It must, however, address the following areas, at a minimum:

Requirements

A-16. The first step in the log estimate process is to determine the logistical requirements for the mission. To determine the requirements, you may use a number or combination of methods. Automated systems such as OPLOG PLANNER, LEW or the SURE program are good tools to use to estimate requirements. If you prefer to do the number crunching yourself, planning factors from the CGSC ST 101-6 (G1/G4 BATTLEBOOK) or the FM 101-10-1/2

may be used to determine your own estimates. Historical data from previous missions should also be used to determine or refine your requirements estimate. Be sure to include all customers when you determine the requirements: organic, attached, and any OPCON units for which you are designated to provide logistical support. Remember, no matter which method or methods you use, the results are only estimates and will have to be refined later based on the actual tactical plan. When you receive the OPORD from your higher headquarters, ensure you consider all specified and implied tasks which have logistical considerations. Also determine what movement and handling requirements there will be for all supplies, equipment, and personnel. Consider the terrain available for you to support from, as well as the terrain and distance you will have to support over. Finally, determine what critical resupply must be accomplished to ensure mission success.

Capabilities

A-17. To correctly determine the logistics capability of your unit, you must consider the capabilities of all the available CSS assets at your disposal. This includes all available CSS units assigned, attached, or OPCON, and the CSS capability organic to the maneuver units themselves. When determining the unit's CSS capability, be sure to consider the unit's current status in terms of personnel and equipment, as well as the projected status of each unit at mission execution. Analyze supply capabilities in terms of storage, distribution, and transportation capacities.

Comparison/Shortfall

A-18. Once you have determined your estimated requirements and the unit's CSS capability, compare them to determine any logistical shortfalls. If there are no shortfalls, go to the analysis step of this methodology. Shortfalls may occur in terms of storage, distribution, and transportation capability or may be caused by personnel or equipment shortfalls based on current on hand shortages or maintenance status. A shortfall may also occur if required facilities or terrain are not available or the plan does not provide enough time to prepare. If there is a shortfall, determine what the shortfall is in terms of short tons, gallons, or other units of measurement and when or where during the operation the shortfall occurs.

Analysis

A-19. Whether or not there is a shortfall, the analysis process must occur for all support operations. The CSS planner must determine: when the support operation must begin, how much time there is to prepare for the mission, the purpose of the support mission, the duration of the mission, and whether the mission can be supported from a fixed location or whether to echelon support forward in some

way. If there is a shortfall identified in the comparison of requirements and capabilities, you must also determine its cause, its significance and its potential impact on the tactical operation.

Solutions

A-20. Determine the most workable solutions based on your analysis. Do not assume away a shortfall by assuming that a higher headquarters will provide additional capability. Make every effort to find solutions based on internal assets first before requesting additional assets from higher headquarters. Ensure that all solutions are integrated into the MDMP to enhance continuity between the tactical decision making and logistical planning.

A-21. During course of action development, the CSS planners within the brigade must begin to draft possible ways to provide the brigade's concept of the operation with CSS. This is challenging because, at this stage of planning, the brigade probably has not selected a specific course of action for the upcoming operation. However, CSS planners should have the restated mission, commander's guidance and intent, and continuously updated staff estimates. This input should come from both the brigade and battalion levels. With this information, the CSS planners at various echelons (i.e. brigade S-1/S-4, support battalion and task force S-1/S-4) can begin to develop several options to support the brigade. Throughout this stage, all the CSS planners must communicate and the brigade S-1/S-4 must integrate this process. Concept of support options for the support battalion include: supply point distribution from the BSA, using a forward logistics element (FLE) during fast paced offensive operations, or using a logistics release point that stages outside the BSA for short periods of time to resupply the task force.

A-22. Based on the brigade's restated mission, the support battalion can begin to plan how they will provide CSS to the brigade, determine if, when, and how the BSA will move, and what the best method may be to defend the BSA. The support battalion must keep the brigade S-1/S-4 informed in order to prevent two different CSS plans from being developed. The task force S-1/S-4 must also begin to develop several options that could be used to support their battalions and ensure these are integrated into the brigade and support battalion planning. At the end of this phase, each echelon of CSS planners in the brigade should have developed course of action statements and sketches for each option that will be analyzed during the next stage of the MDMP.

CSS CONSIDERATIONS IN COA DEVELOPMENT

A-23. During COA development, the logistics planners must refine the logistics estimate they developed during mission analysis. Facts and assumptions developed during mission analysis must be verified and updated. CSS planners must identify any significant CSS considerations and requirements that have a major impact on

mission accomplishment. Additionally, the CSS planner must develop a draft concept of support during this phase of the MDMP.

COA Sustainment Feasibility

A-24. For each course of action, the logistics planner must access its sustainment feasibility. The sustainment feasibility is determined by whether or not the unit possesses the required resources to sustain the unit throughout the tactical operation. Tailoring your logistics estimate for each course of action can help make this determination. If requirements do not exceed capabilities, the sustainment of the course of action will generally be feasible. If any requirements do exceed capabilities you must again determine its significance and potential impact upon the mission. If the shortfall is a "WAR-STOPPER", and there are no workable solutions to the problem, then sustainment of the COA is not feasible. Ensure you have exhausted all possible means to solve the problem, to include support from higher headquarters, before you deem the COA not feasible.

Synchronization Requirements

A-25. The synchronization of CSS during COA analysis is critical to ensure continuous support during the operation. During the war game, the logistical planner will determine, based on the scheme of maneuver, what supplies and services must be where at a given time. This will generate critical CSS actions that must be accomplished to sustain the mission. He must consider time-distance factors and determine which support activity will be available to provide the required support. This is where the logistical planner begins to directly link the actions of task force logistics assets with the support battalion sustainment activities and division/corps resupply activities. He must ensure that all critical CSS activities are included in the synchronization matrix to successfully synchronize all levels of support.

Critical CSS Requirements

A-26. The logistical planner must determine the critical requirements for each sustainment function. Critical CSS requirements normally include high volume, high usage supplies. Class III, IV, and V tend to be critical during almost any tactical operation. Casualty evacuation is always critical, especially due to the limited availability of evacuation assets. Any essential "major muscle movements" required by CSS units, such as movement of CSS assets forward, pre-positioning of ammunition or fuel, setting up and executing a ROM, or reorganization must be identified.

A-27.   During this phase of MDMP, the courses of action are compared using the synchronization matrices and notes taken for each evaluation criteria used. A decision matrix with the evaluation criteria and some type of weighting factor (e.g., numbers, +/-, etc.) should be used to record the results of the course of action comparison. A decision matrix can be used as an aid to obtain a decision from the commander as to what course of action will be selected.

CSS CONSIDERATIONS IN COA COMPARISON

A-28.   In order to compare COAs and determine which is more supportable, logistical planners must calculate estimated attrition rates, project battle losses for critical weapons systems, and project personnel battle losses. The RSR for each COA must be refined and compared to any CSR that may be in effect. Quantities of supplies required, demands on transportation assets, and reconstitution requirements must be compared to determine which COA stresses the units' logistical system the most. An analysis of the risks to CSS assets and operations must be compared and considered.

A-29.   During this phase of the MDMP, the CSS planner at each echelon should use his decision matrix to explain to the commander what course of action he recommends and why. After the commander has selected a course of action, finalized his intent and approved the final CCIRs, another warning order should be issued to subordinate units. At this stage the production of an order begins. The output for this stage is a complete five-paragraph field order and appropriate annexes to be issued to subordinate units.

CSS CONSIDERATIONS IN ORDERS PRODUCTION

A-30 The brigade logistic planners are responsible for paragraph 4 of the OPORD as well as the logistics annex (annex I). These products must be complete, concise and synchronize all levels of logistics support from top to bottom with the tactical plan.

Final Concept Of Support

A-31. The paragraph four consists of the final approved concept of support.   Remember that this paragraph is written primarily to inform the commanders how they will be supported throughout the tactical operation, so do not include details on how the support elements are to execute the plan. Save all those details for the logistics annex.   The concept of support should include a brief synopsis of the support command mission, support area locations to include the locations of the next higher logistics bases, the next higher levels support priorities, the commander's priority of support, significant or critical CSS activities, any significant risks, and the major support requirements in each tactical logistics function. If the

tactical concept of operation is phased, the concept of support should also be phased to facilitate changes of priorities and logistics focus during each phase.

Complete/Concise

A-32.   It is essential that the OPORD be complete, concise, and include all critical tasks that must be accomplished to support the tactical mission. Ensure you consider the command and support relationships of all units within your area of operation and ensure all elements receive support. Ensure you address all of the tactical logistics functions and properly phase the support concept if the tactical concept of operation is phased.

Synchronized Top To Bottom

A-33.   To ensure proper synchronization, include all critical tasks and coordination requirements that were developed during the war gaming phase. Consider developing a logistics synchronization matrix, if possible. Ensure that all priorities of support are in agreement with the scheme of maneuver and weight the main effort.   Coordinate with the other battlefield operating system elements to ensure that there are no inconsistencies in logistics information within the maneuver, engineer, artillery, and CSS annexes.   As subordinate OPORDs are developed, you must ensure that their support plans are consistent and executable within your support framework. Synchronization of resupply operations from the corps/division, to the support battalion, to the task force level is critical.